

**Florin Japanese American Citizens League  
Oral History Project**

**Oral History Interview**

**with**

**FRED OUYE**

**July 6-7, 1995  
Sacramento, California**

**By Percy Fukushima  
Florin Japanese American Citizens League  
and Oral History Program  
California State University, Sacramento  
Sacramento, California**





# JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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## PREFACE

In the summer of 1987, a small group of people from the Florin JACL met at Mary and Al Tsukamoto's home to plan a new project for the organization. Because of the unique history of Florin, we felt that there were special stories that needed to be preserved. The town of Florin, California was once a thriving farming community with a large Japanese American population. The World War II internment of persons of Japanese ancestry living on the west coast, devastated the town and it never recovered. Today there is no town of Florin; it has been merged into the larger county of Sacramento. Many Japanese Americans who reside throughout the United States, however, have their origins from Florin, or have relatives and friends who once had ties to this community. The town may no longer exist, but the spirit of the community continues to survive in people's hearts and memories.

Several hours have been devoted to interviewing former Florin residents. The focus of the interviews was on the forced internment and life in the relocation camps, but our questions touched on other issues. We asked about their immigration to the United States from Japan, pre-war experiences, resettlement after the war and personal philosophies. We also wanted to record the stories of the people left behind. They were friends and neighbors who watched in anguish as the trains transported the community away.

We have conducted these interviews with feelings of urgency. If we are to come away with lessons from this historic tragedy, we must listen to and become acquainted with the people who were there. Many of these historians are in their 70's, 80's and 90's. We are grateful that they were willing to share their experiences and to answer our questions with openness and thoughtfulness.

We owe special thanks to James F. Carlson, former Assistant Dean of American River College and to Jackie Reinier, former Director of the Oral History Program at California State University in Sacramento. Without their enthusiasm, encouragement and expertise, we never could have produced this collection of oral histories. We also wish to acknowledge the project members, volunteers, the Florin JACL which contributed financial support, Sumitomo Bank for their corporate donation, and the Taisho Young Mens Association which contributed some of their assets as they dissolved their corporation on December 31, 1991.



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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

### INTERVIEWER

Percy Fukushima, Oral History Project, Florin Japanese American Citizens League

### INTERVIEW TIME AND PLACE

July 6-7, 1995  
His home

### TRANSCRIBING

Susan Takahashi, Florin JACL member.

### PHOTOGRAPHER

Dan Inouye, member of Florin JACL, reproduced some of the family pictures.

### EDITING

Susan Takahashi made the few corrections made by the interviewee. This was completed in March of 1996.

The biographical summary and the necessary forms were completed by Percy Fukushima and edited by Carol Ouye Hisatomi.

### TAPES AND INTERVIEW RECORDS

Copies of the bound transcript and the tape will be held by the Florin Japanese American Citizens League and in the University Archives at The Library, California State University, Sacramento, California 95819.



## BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Fred Masaru Ouye was born on March 4, 1911, in Florin, California. He was the third son of Kenichi and Sada Nakai Ouye, Japanese immigrants and grape farmers. At an early age, his family moved to Lodi, California. He graduated from Lodi Elementary School in 1926 and then attended Lodi High School and graduated in 1930. He felt he could be a good automobile mechanic, but a serious discussion with his parents persuaded him to seek higher education. With his brother Harold, already a professional pharmacist, as his mentor, he was encouraged to attend the University of California College of Pharmacy. While he was a student, he worked every evening at Misawa Pharmacy. He graduated and passed the state board examination in 1933. After graduation, he worked as a pharmacist in San Jose and San Francisco until he decided to open his own drug store in Lodi, California in 1937.

During the years prior to World War II, Fred's business was growing and becoming successful. In 1938, he married Mary Masuda, a young woman he met while helping at his brother's store during his summer vacation in Sacramento. He started a family with the birth of his daughter, Carol. Their life in Lodi was very much in control until the fateful Sunday, December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked. This event and ensuing Proclamation Order 9066 made him realize that he could not keep his store in operation. At a considerable financial loss, he gave up his store in Lodi and moved to Sacramento in order to relocate as a family group. His family and the rest of the Ouye family, with the exception of one sister, were relocated to Tule Lake Relocation Center. While interned, Fred worked as a pharmacist and later as a laboratory technician in the camp hospital. Eventually, Fred, Mary and Carol relocated to Kansas City, Missouri. There he was employed by Breon Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company.

A few years later, Fred returned to Sacramento. In 1946, he and his brother opened their pharmacy on Fourth Street between L and M Streets. Within a year, they leased a spacious location previously occupied by Sumitomo Bank on the corner of Fourth and L Streets. The business was prospering in 1957 when the City of Sacramento decided to redevelop the entire west end. After being forced to relocate, at a considerable financial loss, they began searching for a new location. They finally located and



purchased a vacant lot on 10th and V Street. They constructed a multiple purpose building which included their pharmacy as the main tenant. After twenty years at this location, both Fred and Harold decided to retire at the same time and sold the business and property to Harold's son.

Since his retirement in 1977, he has attended Adult Education classes in small appliance repair and computer classes. He is a member and a trustee of Parkview Presbyterian Church, a member of Sacramento and Florin chapters of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), and a SIR member of Branch 42. He is currently living in Sacramento with his wife, quite content with the affairs of his life. He is quietly proud of his family successes: his daughter, Carol, achieved a professional career first as a pharmacist and then as a lawyer; Carol's husband, Aki, is a pharmacist working in Sacramento for Longs Drug Store; his granddaughter, Cheryl, earned a Masters Degree in Public Health and is currently raising two children, Brenna and Tara, with her husband, Dr. Alan McNabb, a physician with the Air Force, stationed at Travis AFB in Vacaville, California. His grandson, George, is a Medical Doctor specializing in Family Practice and will be practicing in Sacramento. He and his wife, Naomi, have a daughter, Nicole. His grandson, Gregg, is working in a corporate business office in Sacramento after earning a Bachelors Degree in Business from UCLA and an MBA from Chapman University. Fred's own career was disrupted twice by the government, but each time he overcame the obstacles through his own confidence and faith in his own ability. It was also helpful to have friendly bankers who helped finance his education, relocate his stores, and construct his new building. His life is typical of the Nisei generation, but differs from others because his was more dramatic and more successful.



(Session 1, July 6, 1995)

(Begin Tape 1, Side 1)

FUKUSHIMA: This is an interview with Fred Ouye, a retired Nisei pharmacist. The interviewer is Percy Fukushima of the Florin Japanese American Citizens League, Oral History Project.

Fred, could you give a little history on the background of your family and your home life. Where and when were you born?

OUE: I was born in Florin, California on March 4, 1911.

FUKUSHIMA: What did your father do?

OUE: My father and mother were farmers in Florin. They were growing strawberries and grapes, I think.

FUKUSHIMA: How many siblings did you have?

OUE: Let's see, Percy, I have one sister and three brothers.

FUKUSHIMA: What did they do?

OUE: Harold, my brother next to me, was a pharmacist and he was a partner of mine during the time that we had the pharmacy. And then I have a sister that helped us with the pharmacy and then my youngest brother, Carnegie, he didn't work with us, but he worked for McClellan Field. My eldest brother was



helping us, but he died in 1936. His name was Norman.

FUKUSHIMA: What grammar school did you go to?

OUYE: I went to a grammar school in Lodi, California. It was called Houston Grammar School at that time.

FUKUSHIMA: And you went to Lodi High School?

OUYE: Yes, I went to Lodi High School and graduated in 1930.

FUKUSHIMA: As a child, do you remember or recall what your parents taught you in terms of family obligations and what your duties are and what ethical values you should have as you grow up?

OUYE: Yes, my parents were pretty strict with us. We had to go to school, of course, and being in the farming business, we had to help them during the summers and after school. They encouraged us to participate in sports as well as other civic duties that was required at that time.

FUKUSHIMA: Did you go to a Japanese language school?

OUYE: No, I didn't. We didn't have any at that time in Lodi, so I didn't have to go. I regret that, though. (chuckle)

FUKUSHIMA: Okay, let's talk about your education. You went to Lodi High School.

OUYE: Yes, I finished there in 1930. Then I went to University of California, San Francisco, College of Pharmacy, and I finished that in 1933. Then I took my state boards and got a job in San



Jose, and that's as far as my education goes.

FUKUSHIMA: At that time, then, you were accepted to go into pharmacy school right after high school?

OUYE: Uh huh, yes, after I graduated from high school. In those days, we didn't have to. . . . Well, nowadays I guess it's harder to get in, but in those days it wasn't that bad to get in right after high school.

FUKUSHIMA: When you went to San Jose, did you work for a pharmacist?

OUYE: Yes, I worked for a Japanese pharmacy. The name of it was Fuji Pharmacy in San Jose. And I worked there for awhile, a couple of years, I guess.

FUKUSHIMA: And this was in 1933?

OUYE: No, this would be about maybe 1934-35.

FUKUSHIMA: So, what did you do between that time and World War II?

OUYE: Let's see, before that. . . . Well, the war started in 1941. My brother had a store already in Sacramento, so he helped me open up a store in Lodi which was a small store, and that was in 1937. Yeah, 1937. Then when I had the store, the war broke out in 1941, and we had to evacuate and had to sell out and close up, after I opened up. So that's when the war broke out.

FUKUSHIMA: I see. At the time of evacuation then, you and your brother were running a pharmacy store in Lodi?



- OUYE: He had a store in Sacramento.
- FUKUSHIMA: Oh, wasn't Lodi, it was in Sacramento?
- OUYE: Harold was in Sacramento, and I went to Lodi because I was from Lodi so I thought I would try it there.
- FUKUSHIMA: Oh, I see. So, you had already started a business by December 7, 1941?
- OUYE: Yes, oh yes.
- FUKUSHIMA: And what were your feelings at the time?
- OUYE: Well, my feeling was that I couldn't believe it really. We were having our Sunday lunch and one of my good friends Sam Funamura, who I knew for a long time, came in and came in the store, you know, and I had to tell him what happened. He said he couldn't believe it. Anyhow, we kept listening and it was true. But anyhow, it was a shock and we didn't know what to do. So I think that night we went to Sacramento. I visited my brother and my wife's folks to see how they felt and see how they were. But, it was true.
- FUKUSHIMA: I see. Did you have Caucasian customer or mostly Japanese customers?
- OUYE: About half and half, I guess. I had alot of Caucasians, but for a part, I didn't lose any Caucasian customers, except maybe one or two. But the rest of the younger fellas that I knew all came. In fact, they, I guess they felt sorry for me and came



more (chuckle).

FUKUSHIMA: So, did you go to camp with the family, with the whole family or did you go by yourself and with your wife? Did you have children?

OUYE: Yes, we had Carol. So what happened was I got permission from the, what was it, the Relocation Board I guess you might call it, to move to Sacramento, because they were in a different district. If we left it the way it was, I would have to have gone to Arkansas or some other place, I couldn't move with the family, so they said I could move to Sacramento, which we did. We closed up our store, sold the house and moved to Sacramento, so that my wife and we could all go together. Harold's family and our family and then there was my younger brother too, Carnegie, so we could go together. The only one that didn't go with us was Alice, because she just got married to Taniguchi, so she went to Texas where he was located, so she went to Texas. We went to camp.

FUKUSHIMA: So what camp did you go?

OUYE: We went to Tule Lake. Course, first we went to that smaller camp, Walerga. From there we went to Tule Lake.

FUKUSHIMA: I see. You said you were married before?

OUYE: Yes, we were married in '38, so we were married about 3 years.

*Neerak Bond*



FUKUSHIMA: What kind of life did you have in camp?

OUYE: In camp I worked for the pharmacy for awhile and then I got transferred to the hospital laboratory and I worked there until we left camp. I wanted to do something different, so the head of the lab department let me work there, so I did. I got to do alot of blood work and all those things which I enjoyed quite a bit. So, the hospital work was good.

FUKUSHIMA: So you relocated to...did you relocate to any other place?

OUYE: Yes, we went to Kansas City. Let's see, that was in , let's see what date was that?

MRS. OUYE: I don't know, we stayed in Kansas City.....when did the war end?

FUKUSHIMA: August 1945.

MRS. OUYE: It must have been 1943, no . . .

FUKUSHIMA: We went into camp in 1942.

MRS. OUYE: Was it '42? Then, we left the following year, 1943 we were in Kansas City.

FUKUSHIMA: So you stayed in Tule Lake for about a year?

MRS. OUYE: A year and fifteen months, I remember. Yeah, away in May and we left in August.

FUKUSHIMA: So you left in August 1943.

MRS. OUYE: Yeah.

OUYE: So, we left camp in 1943?



MRS. OUYE: Uh huh, the following year after we went there. We went in May, but we left around August or September. I remember we stayed in camp for fifteen months.

FUKUSHIMA: Then you went to Kansas City?

MRS. OUYE: We stayed there for two and a half years.

OUYE: We stayed there for two and a half years and then we came back to Sacramento.

FUKUSHIMA: What kind of job did you do then?

OUYE: In Kansas City I worked for a drug company. The name of it then was George A. Breon Company, and they made pharmaceuticals, like tablets, liquids and other things. Later, this company was bought out by the Sterling Company, but at that time it was called George A. Breon, and Mr. Breon, whom I met, was good enough to hire me. I went to see him and he said, "Well, you don't look like an enemy to me", so he hired me. And the funny part is, his son was fighting in the Aleutian Islands, he was in the Air Force. Well, he said, "That's alright, you don't look like the enemy to me", so he hired me. (chuckle) Anyway, that's how I got the job. I worked there for almost three years and then we came back to Sacramento.

FUKUSHIMA: And at that time Fred, no Harold was already back in Sacramento?



OUYE: Yes, he was back a little before we were, so fortunately he didn't sell his house, so we stayed with them for awhile until we got relocated.

FUKUSHIMA: So that was the store at Fourth and L then?

OUYE: Yes, that's right, Fourth and L.

FUKUSHIMA: When you first came back, you had the pharmacy at Fourth and L?

OUYE: Well, he started a small place near Fourth and L, in fact it was between Fourth, let's see between L and M on Fourth. It was apparently owned by Nishijima's. We rented a small place there. But in the meantime this Sumitomo Bank opened up so we said let's try and go there. So we tried it. We had borrowed money from Bank of America and we got in (chuckle).

FUKUSHIMA: When you were at Kansas City, did you have problems finding housing?

OUYE: Yes, we did. We couldn't find housing right away. My wife had to stay with a Christian school where they let the ladies stay, and then they got that YMCA. As a matter of fact, we had to buy a house to find a place to stay. So we bought a duplex, and the people that stayed there, that owned the duplex, they sold out and came to California. So, he came to California and then I bought his house and we had trouble



OUYE: there. You know, people didn't want us to go in, but we had people, a Mr. and Mrs. James Bradfield. They were living downstairs, renting from Mr. Ditto that owned the house. They were living downstairs and they stood ground for us and they said that they weren't going to be forced out since we bought the house. They were members of the Friends Church, the Quaker Church and they stood up for us. So, we got to stay. We didn't have no problems after that though. The neighbors were all good and Carol went to grammar school there and she has some neighbors there that she still writes to Carol. So that was alright.

I might add that while I was there, I met a hakujin friend by the name of Mr. Fell, and he took me around in his car. I didn't have a car, so he took me around to do all of that paperwork, and I don't know why he did this, but he did. I thanked him, but I never did find out what happened to him. But he sure was a good gentleman. So, I guess there is goodness still left in this world.

FUKUSHIMA: Let me ask you about your work in Kansas City. Did you encounter any discrimination or a person who had animosity against the Japanese?

OUYE: In Kansas City, the people there were really on the better side, I thought. We didn't have too much of that. Maybe there



OUYE: was some, but actually I didn't encounter any discrimination or anything like that. It was okay.

FUKUSHIMA: Did you go to church while you were in Kansas City?

OUYE: We went to a hakujin church, I think it was a Methodist church. I didn't go every Sunday, but they had a hakujin party and wanted us to go and used to come pick us up, so I had to go, but it was alright.

FUKUSHIMA: In recent years, what do you consider the most important thing that has happened to you?

OUYE: Well, I think at least I'm healthy. I guess that's number one (chuckle).

FUKUSHIMA: Do you have your family here?

OUYE: Yes, my family are here. I only have one daughter, Carol, of course, her husband Aki, and all her three children. Before that, I think I'm lucky because my wife got over her encounter with cancer, which she had about ten years ago. But she is alright now. I'm glad I'm healthy too, although not perfect.

We're happy that my grandkids are all well; they're all out of school now and hopefully they will be a good contribution to the community.

FUKUSHIMA: I think you should be proud of what Carol has been doing lately.

OUYE: Yes, we are. She is quite a lady.



FUKUSHIMA: What kind of training, or what did you teach her that you feel made her as good as she is?

OUYE: Gee, I can't pin it down because I don't know exactly what it is. We tried to do the right thing, treat everybody right and well, we're like our old folks, you know, the old Issei folks, we treat everybody the way we like to be treated. I think we're a little bit fussy, I thought, about little things, but maybe it paid off. I don't know, Percy.

FUKUSHIMA: So, the idea is to apply the Golden Rule.

OUYE: Yeah, that's right. I think that's right. The Golden Rule. We should treat others like we like to be treated, so I think that's one of the things. Of course, Carol and her husband, Aki, they sure like to make their kids study and go to school. That's one thing. They participate in sports too. That's one thing, he's been always hollering about, school, school, school, so that helps, I think.

FUKUSHIMA: What about yourself, did you have to push Carol to study?

OUYE: I guess we did, yeah, we pushed her quite a bit. She pushed herself too though. She went to McGeorge after she was a pharmacist. She worked during the day and then at night time she went to McGeorge for four years and that's kind of hard. But she did it. Course, we had to watch the kids too, so we got a diploma for that, for watching the kids (laughter). She



OUYE: gave us a little certificate. That's good.

FUKUSHIMA: What are Carol's children doing?

OUYE: The oldest one, Cheryl is the oldest one, she's got a Master's degree in Public Health from some college in Maryland. She also has a degree from Chapman in Organic Chemistry. Number Two Son, George, he is interning at Modesto, at a hospital in Modesto. His specialty is, fortunately he is going to be a family physician. I think another year he will be out. Number Three Son, Greg, grandson, I should say. He graduated from UCLA with history degree and then this year he got his MBA from Chapman College in Pomona. So, he hasn't got a job yet, but he will get one.

FUKUSHIMA: He just has to be patient.

OUYE: Yeah, that's what we tell him.

FUKUSHIMA: During the past year or so, it's been hard to find jobs.

OUYE: Any job.

FUKUSHIMA: People are getting laid off.

OUYE: Yeah, it sure is hard to find a job nowadays.

FUKUSHIMA: At least when the opportunity comes, he will be prepared.

OUYE: That's right. He'll be ready to accept it. That's the thing. And then I forgot to mention Cheryl's husband is a surgeon at Travis Air Force. His name is McNabb. He is a Caucasian person. He is a very nice fellow though. Very nice.



FUKUSHIMA: So you have three grandkids, grandsons?

OUE: Two grandsons and one granddaughter.

FUKUSHIMA: Who are doing real well.

OUE: Well, so far.

FUKUSHIMA: As far as education and training. So you have alot to be proud of.

OUE: Well, yes.

FUKUSHIMA: You said a little while ago that Aki pushed them, right? Good thing he pushed them.

OUE: (Laughter) That's right. That's true. Because some of Aki's friends' children, they're not going to school. So there's a difference there I think. So I guess you got to push them, Percy, to some extent.

FUKUSHIMA: That's a lesson I think we all should learn that as parents we should push the children.

OUE: A little bit, yeah.

FUKUSHIMA: And discipline.

OUE: Yeah, well, did your parents push you when you were young?

FUKUSHIMA: No.

OUE: (Laughter)

FUKUSHIMA: If you can imagine if there were no World War II, what would your life be like? Do you have any idea?

OUE: Let's see, World War II (papers shuffling, long pause)



FUKUSHIMA: Right here, relocation.

OUYE: Oh, way down there, reached the end. (Long pause, reading)  
How do you spend your time now? Are you active in the  
Japanese American Community? No, not that much.  
(long pause)

FUKUSHIMA: Can we talk about the practice, today's practice in pharmacy  
as compared to practice when you first started practicing  
pharmacy?

OUYE: You mean,

FUKUSHIMA: How it was when you started and how it is when you retired?

OUYE: Oh, I see. Well, it is really different you know. Because when  
I graduated, I couldn't get a job in an American, Caucasian  
owned store, like Longs or Payless or Thrifty. I couldn't get  
in. But after the war, you know, that changed. So, people who  
are pharmacists now, they work for all these chains, which I  
think is really good.

FUKUSHIMA: What about the dispensing of prescriptions itself? Was there  
much change in the way you fill prescriptions?

OUYE: I think that has changed too, yes, Percy. I think now the  
pharmacist has to be able to tell the customer what not to  
take with this, or when to take it, or what not to take with  
certain foods, you have to know everything about the drug  
now. We knew that too, but now you have to be able to tell



OUYE: the patient that. You're required to do that if they so ask, so in that respect, they make it so that the public will know what they are taking and why they are taking it. So there's that difference.

FUKUSHIMA: Do you have any idea what year that became effective?

OUYE: Within the last two or three years. This is all recent, I think. Because we never had to do that. We're having too much government regulation, to tell you the truth. It's too much. But, they're doing it. I guess it's okay.

FUKUSHIMA: The prescription that is dispensed nowadays are mostly manufactured by chemical processing, like Merck? Back then, when you first started pharmacy, they didn't have these drug companies.

OUYE: No, we didn't.

FUKUSHIMA: You had to mix your own, didn't you?

OUYE: Of course, yes we did alot of that too. We did, we really did, that's right. However, these big companies are swallowing up the smaller ones and the bigger ones are getting bigger.

(End Tape 1, Side 1)

(Begin Tape 1, Side 2)

FUKUSHIMA: We were talking about dispensing prescriptions. Back in the old days you used to mix your own?

OUYE: Quite a bit of it. Of course that was quite a while back. They



OUYE: don't do that at all now. All they have to do is read the prescription, find what you have, count it out and give it to them. Tell them what it does, how it does it and some of the bad things about it, that's about it.

FUKUSHIMA: Do you think it is the pharmacist's responsibility to tell the patient the effect of medication, the side effect?

OUYE: Yes, I think it is up to the pharmacist to check it. If there is a reaction, they should call the pharmacist or the doctor. Usually, well, of course it is up to the doctor though, but still I think the pharmacist should be able to warn the patient if there is any danger of over taking it, or if you have any reaction.

FUKUSHIMA: What if a problem comes up and the pharmacy doesn't know all the medication that the patient is taking? Sometimes one drug interacts with another and causes disastrous effects, but you don't know what the other person, what kind of drugs he is taking. So you don't know the kind of reaction among the drugs that the individual might be taking.

OUYE: Yeah, that is true.

FUKUSHIMA: So, the pharmacy really don't know what the effects are going to be. As you see the dosage, you might be able to say, this is going to have a certain effect on you, but when a person is taking more than one medicine, ...



OUYE: Yeah, we call that drug interaction. That is very difficult to tell. And I think in a case like that though, I guess the patient will get ill and start to throw up or something.

FUKUSHIMA: Do you have any idea what the pharmacist is going to be, say fifty years from now? Will it change drastically?

OUYE: I think it is going to change, I don't know exactly which way it is going though. I have no idea. It's going to be tough. All these changes we're having, like HMO and stuff like that, it's tough.

FUKUSHIMA: Do you think that the pharmacy will become part of the HMO?

OUYE: Well, can't ever tell. The HMO might take over the pharmacy, I hope not (laughter). They're trying to run the doctors now. So, it's going to be tough. I don't know how it is going to turn out.



(Session 2, July 7, 1995)

(Tape 1, side 2)

FUKUSHIMA: This is Percy Fukushima doing an interview with Fred Ouye.  
This is July 7, 1995.

Fred, I'd like to go back to the previous discussion we had during our last interview. I would like to ask some specific questions about your life decisions that you made along the way. For example, do you recall why your family moved from Florin to Lodi?

OUYE: I think, if I remember correctly, we were living with our uncle at the time. I don't remember him personally, but I think he sold the land at Florin and then my dad decided to go to Lodi because at that time Lodi was known quite well for their grapes. So, he decided to go to Lodi and go into grape farming. So that's why we decided to go to Lodi.

FUKUSHIMA: So, at Florin they raised grapes and Lodi was raising grape, so basically you stayed in the same kind of business.

OUYE: That's true, Percy. That's right.

FUKUSHIMA: During your high school, and maybe prior to high school years, you had to make certain decisions on what kind of work you were going to be doing or what was going to be your profession. Do you have any recollection as to when you decided to go into the field that you did? And can you tell us



why you chose that particular profession?

OUYE: I think during while I was going to high school, I think my dad kept telling me, well I better go on to college and go into some kind of professional school. At that time, my brother Harold was going there and as a matter of fact he was out at that time so I decided well maybe I should go there too. My father and mother both wanted me to go to pharmacy school, so we did. That's how I got there.

FUKUSHIMA: So your parents was very influential in deciding what to do? Or you looked at your older brother Harold more or less as an idol to kind of do what he wanted to do?

OUYE: Yes, I think that's right, Percy.

FUKUSHIMA: Next question I guess what I wanted to ask you, it's kind of personal, and you don't have to answer this question if you don't want to. Or, we have a chance to erase it later on. How did you meet your wife?

OUYE: I met her in Sacramento when I was helping my brother at his store. He had a store in Sacramento at this time. My wife's parents had a restaurant downtown and I used to go eat there. Then that's where I met her. So, I guess that's how it started. You said how did you meet your wife, and I met her in a restaurant, and that's how it started.

FUKUSHIMA: About what year was that?



- OUYE: Back in 1930, no around 1929.
- FUKUSHIMA: So that was before you went to San Francisco?
- OUYE: Yes, yes that's right.
- FUKUSHIMA: But you were living in Lodi at that time? But your brother had a pharmacy here?
- OUYE: No, wait a minute. Yeah, I think so. I can't remember exactly, but I think my dad was farming in Lodi at the time. And then during my summer vacation, I went to Sacramento to help and work with my brother there. And that's how it started.
- FUKUSHIMA: So your courtship lasted how many years? Well, not exactly courtship (laughter)
- OUYE: I guess it lasted maybe three years.
- FUKUSHIMA: So you were real familiar with her by that time, three years. Fred, I know that you worked in a job in San Jose as a pharmacist after you finished your pharmacy school. What motivated you to open up a store in Lodi?
- OUYE: Well, in those days, we Niseis worked only in Japanese-owned stores. We weren't able to work in a Caucasian store like they do now, like people work for Longs, Payless or things like that. But in those days we couldn't do that, so we had to have our own store, or work for somebody in some Japanese store. And of course the Japanese stores were small and couldn't give us the salary that we would like to have had, so



OUYE: I thought well instead of working there I'd open a store in Lodi, which didn't have a Japanese store. And so my brother helped me open up a store in Lodi and that was back in I think 1937 that I opened it up. And then that's the reason for me going there, like I said, I thought getting on my own would be alot better than working for somebody else and I wasn't getting anyplace anyway, so that's the reason why I came back to Lodi.

FUKUSHIMA: So it was mostly economic? Being your own boss?

OUYE: Yes, that's right.

FUKUSHIMA: Those are very important reasons.

OUYE: Yes, at that time I think it was. Everybody wanted to be their own boss. It's a little bit different now.

FUKUSHIMA: Later on I'd like to ask you how you got the money to get your store started, but let's go on to the next question I have. I'd like to ask you about your relocation to Kansas City. Maybe you already told us, but let's reiterate as to why you chose Kansas City and not Chicago or another city.

OUYE: Well, I think it's because the relocation office thought they had a job for me in Kansas City, but when I got there, this pharmacy job wasn't ready for me, so I had to look for another job and that kind of was well disappointing, but I think it was the fault of the relocation, the agency that was doing it. But



- OUYE: anyway, I managed to find a job with George A. Breon Company, and they were manufacturers of pharmaceuticals. They said, well we could use a pharmacist. I went to see the boss, the real boss, George A. Breon. I talked to him and he said, "Well, you look like an honest guy, I don't see why we can't hire you." So he hired me and as a matter of fact, his son was in the Pacific fighting the Japanese. But he said he didn't see no difference, so at least I got a job there. And I worked there until I got back.
- FUKUSHIMA: So, did you feel that the relocation authority let you down, not telling you that you had to have a license or certificate to practice pharmacy in the state of Missouri?
- OUYE: Yeah, I didn't have a license, naturally, so that's why I guess I couldn't get the job, but they did let me down. I guess they felt bad about it too, but it happened that way, so I couldn't do anything about it. But, I took the Board later and got another job, but I still was working for George A. Breon. That was the only job I had. I stuck with them.
- FUKUSHIMA: And you decided to come back to California after two and a half years.
- OUYE: Yes.
- FUKUSHIMA: We covered that before. The second part of this interview has to do with economics, your finances and how you managed to



attend college during the midst of the Great Depression, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1933. Do you recall how you managed to finance your schooling?

OUYE: Well, Percy, I know we didn't have much, but my dad wanted me to go to school, so I went to our bank. It was the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Lodi, and a man named Mr. Wyshek, he was president of the bank and I talked to him. Of course, he knew my dad too, but anyway, I asked him if he could loan me the money to go to school and he did! It kind of surprised me. We didn't have any collateral or anything, he just loaned it to me on good faith. And so, in fact I borrowed it for every year I went to school. I paid it back during the summer. I came back and worked and paid it back, but he was good enough to give me the money. So, I got to go to school. I was very thankful for that.

FUKUSHIMA: Do you think that was common practice at the time, for a bank to finance students going to college? I know nowadays that the government guarantees loans to students, but during those days, you didn't hear about too many students being able to borrow money without collateral. Were you a good student?

OUYE: No, I wasn't a good student, just a mediocre student, but apparently he had faith in Japanese I think, and he knew that, well of course my father banked there too, but we didn't have



OUYE: all that kind of money. But I think he had faith in the Japanese people. And this bank was run by the German people, and you know how the German people are, hardworking, so I think it was just good faith that he had in all of us and that's how I got by.

FUKUSHIMA: Anyhow, so you finished school, paid it back, paid all the money back. I know that during your life, you probably suffered many economic losses, some of which was purely involuntary. Do you recall how much you lost when you had to close the store in Lodi at the outbreak of the second World War?

OUYE: Yes, I had to close the store so I could go to Sacramento so I could be with my parents and with Mary's parents too. I had a big sign up "evacuation sale" and I sold everything out and then I guess I took a loss, yes. I don't know exactly the figure, but I guess around maybe fifteen thousand or somewhere around there, it wasn't very much, but we took a loss anyway.

FUKUSHIMA: Fifteen thousand doesn't seem like a small amount of money at that time. It seems to me like fifteen thousand was a lot of money back in 1942. But you suffered another loss too, didn't you, during the time that Sacramento started to redevelop that particular area?

OUYE: Yeah, we lost again, you know, we had to move out again.



OUYE: After we got started, my brother and I opened a store on Fourth and L and we had to move out again. I think that loss was even much more than what we suffered in Lodi. But anyway, it was a loss. I think the next question you were going to ask me was how did we finance the construction of the new store at Tenth and V streets? Well there again, I think we got a loan from Sumitomo Bank. And they loaned us the money, but I have to say that when we opened up the first store, before the redevelopment, I think we went to the Bank of America and they gave us the money. So, I'm grateful for them.

FUKUSHIMA: There's just a little bit more that I would like to do on your family geneology, and I'll get to that later. But this basically concludes my interview, and in conclusion is there anything that you wish to add or elaborate on anything that has been said or discussed?

OUYE: No, Percy, I think you covered everything quite adequately. I appreciate you coming down and giving me the opportunity to give this interview, and I think you are doing a good job.



# Relocation From Slum Area Inje

## High Cost Of Moving Hurts Some

By Edward F. Meagher

How's business?

"Good," said radio store owner Kanji Nishijima.

"Not so good," replied market owner Louie King.

"Good," said market owner Sam Wong. "We're doing twice as much business since we moved to our new location."

Nishijima, King and Wong are among the owners of the 170 businesses relocated from the 15 block Capitol Mall slum clearance project area.

By 5 to 1 the owners interviewed in a 10 per cent cross section survey of the businesses agree with Nishijima and Wong. Business is

### First Of Two Articles

This is the first of two articles on the relocation of businesses from the Capitol Mall slum clearance project area.

better at their new locations.

And a second survey, a 6 per cent cross section study by the research staff of the board of equalization, bears out this finding.

### Taxable Sales Jump

Total taxable retail sales reported to the board by the relocated businesses in operation for nine months at their new locations jumped 15.6 per cent above the total for the last nine months of operations at their mall project locations. By 5 to 1 these businesses showed an upturn in sales.

Four businesses in operation for six months in their new locations showed an aggregate taxable sales increase of 8 per cent. Two showed an upturn, one a loss and one an inconclusive result.

"The higher gain for the nine month period," said John Marshall, senior statistician for the board, "seems to indicate that the longer a business has been relocated, the greater is the improvement in its sales record."

Among the businesses surveyed were apparel shops, groceries, bars, an appliance store and a pharmacy, florist, hotel, dry cleaner, fish



Sam Wong, who relocated his market from 431 N Street, left, to 1330 O Street, right, in a high density residential neighborhood, states th is doing





## Nichi Bei Times

Wednesday, October 12, 1977

SACRAMENTO  
OUYE'S PHARMACY

SACRAMENTO, Oct. 11 — Ouye's Pharmacy, the first nisei owned pharmacy to be opened here after evacuation, has changed ownership as of the first of the month.

Started in 1946 by Harold N. Ouye and Fred M. Ouye, the new owner is Lloyd N. Ouye, son of Harold Ouye. Lloyd Ouye is a graduate of the University of Pacific College of Pharmacy, Stockton, in 1973 and has worked in stores in Stockton and Sacramento.

Former owners both graduated from University of California, College of Pharmacy, Harold in 1928 and Fred in 1933. Besides being a registered pharmacist in California, Harold holds one for state of Illinois while Fred has one in Missouri.

"After more than 40 years in the drug store business, brothers Harold and Fred Ouye are putting their mortar and pestle on the shelf and calling it a day. Ouye's Pharmacy will be taken over by Lloyd Ouye, son of Harold, and thus keep the business in the family."

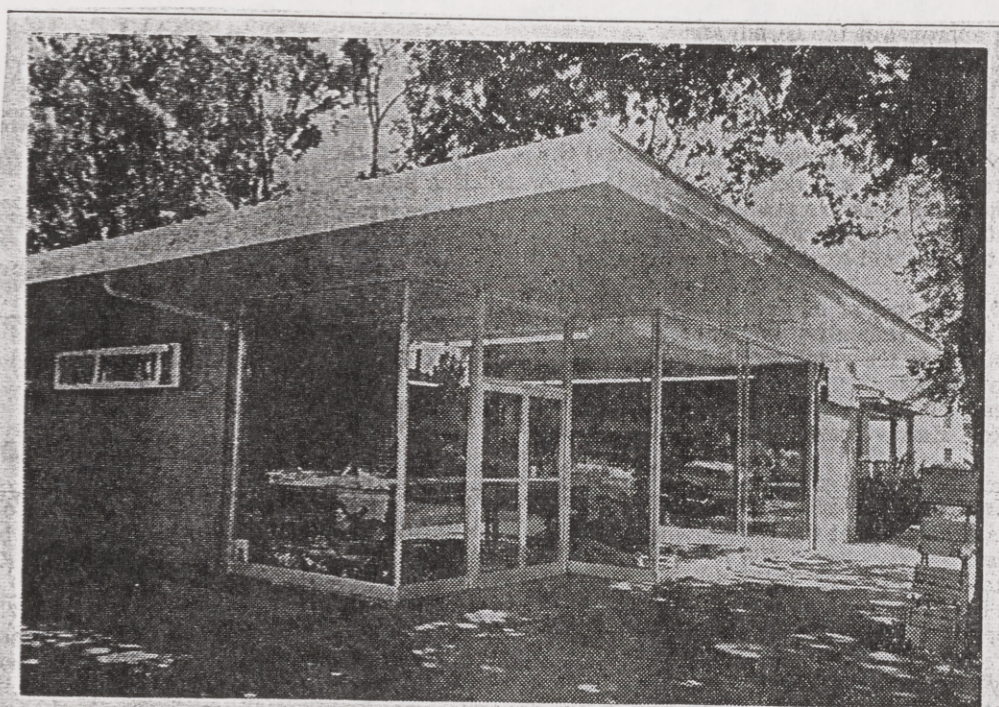
This report from Mrs. Alice Taniguchi, a faithful employee at Ouye's Pharmacy, will be received with mixed emotions by hundreds of Sacramentans — nay — thousands, who have enjoyed doing business at the corner drug store, whether filling a prescription or buying a greeting card.

The Ouye brothers have been an important part of the Japanese community, interrupted, sadly, when World War II broke out and they were forced, first, into the interment camp at Tulelake and later evacuated to the Midwest.

Harold started the Nippon Drugs at 3rd and L Sts., in the heart of the Japanese community, in 1932. After the war started he was forced to sell out and he returned to Sacramento in 1945, first working at McClellan Air Force Base and then, a year later, opening a drug store at 4th and L Streets. Fred, the younger brother, had started a drug store in Lodi in 1937. It also was named Nippon Drugs and grew into a thriving business. It, too, came to an end when World War II broke out. Fred returned to California in 1946 and the brothers formed a partnership under the name of Ouye's Pharmacy. The store was moved to 10th and V Streets when Sacramento's west end was redeveloped.

"Now they can relax and find some pleasure," Mrs. Taniguchi points out. "Harold, as a hobby, plays the banjo and is a member of the Sacramento Banjo group and an ardent photographer while Fred plays the madolin and guitar and likes fishing and gardening."

Lloyd, as new owner, she reports "hopes to continue to give his customers the same personal touch and concern that his father and uncle did."

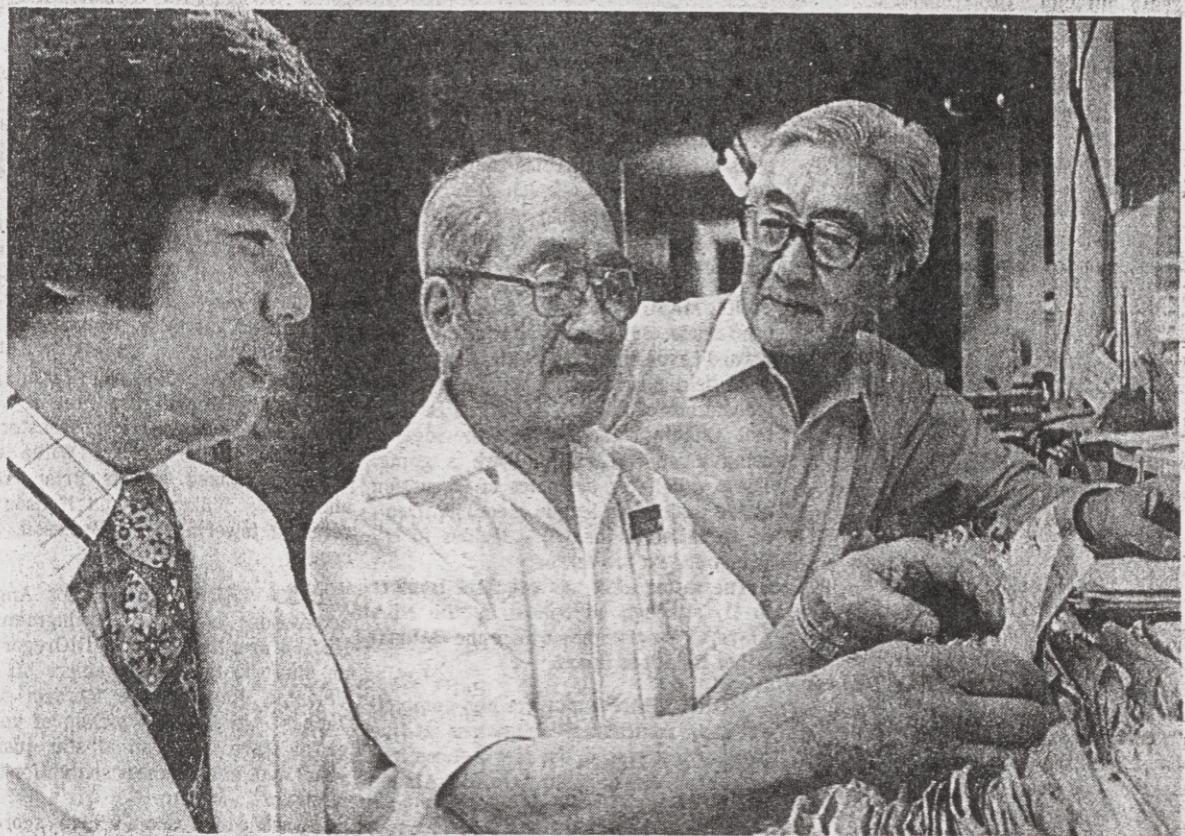


COMPLETED—Ouye's Pharmacy, formerly at 400 L Street, has moved into newly completed building at 2130 10th Street. Owned by Harold N. and Fred Ouye, the pharmacy has been in operation in Sacramento 13 years. Building was designed by George Muraki and erected by Bob Guro. Be



# Business

The Sacramento Union



Lloyd Ouye, left, listens as his father, Harold, and his uncle Fred, right, go over the 3,600 customer files at Ouye's Pharmacy. The two brothers sold out to Lloyd after over 40 years in the pharmacy business.

## Ouye brothers may be retiring, but pharmacy still family-run

By STEVE CHANECKA  
Staff Writer

October has been a strange month for two Japanese-American brothers. You might call it a change of life.

On Oct. 1, Harold and Fred Ouye transferred their longtime corner drug store, Ouye's Pharmacy at 10th and V Streets, to Harold's 27-year-old son, Lloyd. Harold first opened a drug store in Sacramento called Nippon Drugs in 1932. Ten years later, he was forced to sell out and was evacuated to Tule Lake with others of Japanese extraction in California.

Fred, five years younger at 66, graduated from University of California of College of Pharmacy in San Francisco in 1933 and worked in San Francisco and San Jose before opening up his own drug store, also called Nippon Pharmacy, in Lodi in 1937. Harold graduated from the same school.

old pointing to a file of 3,600 customers, "We have a record of what kinds of drugs some of our customers can't have."

Ouye's has also maintained a credit account system for its customers because "a lot of them don't have MasterCard or other credit cards."

There's also the camaraderie which developed between customers and the owners after years of personal service.

"I'm going to miss my customers," Fred Ouye said. "I was telling one old guy we're retiring and I got kind of choked up. When you work at a place so long, it means something to you."

"It's not the same for the guy who works eight hours a day at some company and goes home. He can forget about his job. Here it's different," he said.

Harold Ouye pointed out that pharmacy seems to be a family thing.

"FRED'S DAUGHTER is a pharmacist, too," he explained. "And she mar-

customers who come here from Power Inn Road," said Harold. "They pass many other pharmacies on the way."

The Ouyes never have depended on foot traffic for business. "We have five doctors right here so they keep us pretty busy right there," Fred explained.

THE PROBLEMS have increased throughout the years, but right now the brothers concur government regulation is the worst one. "In the 1930s," Harold pointed out, "running a pharmacy was easy. We didn't have to fill out all these long forms and government statements so much. They take time."

The only other problems they thought at all serious were pilferage and, of course, competition. "But we've always had competition. Pilferage is on the rise," Fred said. The Ouyes have had few problems with drug addicts trying to get prescriptions filled.

"WE CAN USUALLY spot them."



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BOTH WORKED in the pharmacy and laboratory departments at Tule Lake during their year's stay, but in 1943 Harold went to Chicago to work for International Harvester and Fred moved to Kansas City where he worked with a drug company.

In 1946, the Florin natives returned to Sacramento and opened their first corner pharmacy at 4th and L Streets. They remained there until 1960 when redevelopment forced them to the store's present location. In all the Ouye brothers gave more than 30 years continuous service to the Sacramento community.

Fred's not sure how he wants to spend his new-found leisure time.

"I FEEL KIND of lost and don't know quite what to do with myself yet," he explained during an interview Wednesday at the pharmacy. "For all these years I've been working at least 10 hours a day."

Harold, although 71, is still in excellent physical condition as is Fred. He plans to do some traveling with his wife Grace. "There are a lot of parts in the United States to see," Harold said, "places like Washington D.C. and New York."

Fred said he'd do some traveling with his wife Mary, but that he'd rather stay closer to home. "Yeh, I want to see some of the United States, but not too far." Both brothers said they might make trips to Japan.

Despite being officially retired, the brothers intend to help Lloyd out for about six months, and will "gradually be phased out," according to Harold.

Although their prices are a little higher than the chain stores, both brothers agree the key for independent druggists is personal service.

"NO BIG STORE has this," said Har-

old pointing to a file of 3,600 customers, "We have a record of what kinds of drugs some of our customers can't have."

Ouye's has also maintained a credit account system for its customers because "a lot of them don't have MasterCard or other credit cards."

There's also the camaraderie which developed between customers and the owners after years of personal service.

"I'm going to miss my customers," Fred Ouye said. "I was telling one old guy we're retiring and I got kind of choked up. When you work at a place so long, it means something to you."

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Harold Ouye pointed out that pharmacy seems to be a family thing.

"FRED'S DAUGHTER is a pharmacist, too," he explained. "And she married a pharmacist."

Fred's daughter, Carol Hisatomi, only works part-time now, but her husband, Aki, is a pharmacist for Gemco. And, his sister Sharon is a pharmacist in San Jose. Last, but not least, Aki's late father, George Hisatomi, operated a pharmacy in Sacramento before the war.

"That must be some kind of record," Harold said, "seven pharmacists in two families."

While the ethnic support of Japanese Americans helped the Ouyes in business at the beginning, the clientele is mixed now and far reaching. "We have some

customers who come here from Power Inn Road," said Harold. "They pass many other pharmacies on the way."

The Ouyes never have depended on foot traffic for business. "We have five doctors right here so they keep us pretty busy right there," Fred explained.

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The only other problems they thought at all serious were pilferage and, of course, competition. "But we've always had competition. Pilferage is on the rise," Fred said. The Ouyes have had few problems with drug addicts trying to get prescriptions filled.

"WE CAN USUALLY spot them," Fred said. "They come in with larger than average prescriptions and don't show identification. Anyhow, we can almost always tell a doctor's signature because we've been in business so long; we've seen nearly all of them at one time or other."

As the two brothers recalled their decades of serving the Sacramento community, young Lloyd toiled away filling prescriptions and generally taking care of business.

He didn't have much time for an interview because he has a tough act to follow.



1915

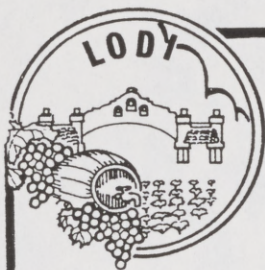
# *Lodi Nisei Baseball Reunion*

1983



July 23rd and 24th, 1983





HOME OF THE FLAME TOKAYS

## JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

23 NORTH STOCKTON STREET  
LODI, CALIFORNIA 95240

CHARTERED 1977

The Lodi Nisei Baseball Reunion Committee would like to extend our warm welcome to all of you here today. We have been looking forward with great anticipation for this reunion to become a reality. It has been over a year in preparation and has finally culminated tonight with this great gathering.

We are especially happy that so many of the former ballplayers were able to attend. A special welcome to those who have traveled long distances to be here.

Welcome Home to Lodi!  
Baseball Reunion Committee

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Greetings!

Although JACL has only been a part of this group of baseball players for the past seven years, 1977 - 1983, we are proud to have been your co-sponsors.

I'd like to thank everyone who helped make this gathering possible: The Baseball Reunion Committee who met weekly for planning and preparation; the Friends of JACL and the Buddhist Church who prepared much of the food; and most important, the Coaches, Players, and their wives who furnish the memories.

During this reunion, the Lodi Chapter JACL hopes that you can renew old acquaintances, make new friends, and have an enjoyable experience.

*Kunio Kawaguchi*

President,  
Lodi Chapter JACL

### SCHEDULE FOR REUNION

#### Saturday, July 23rd

- 8:00 a.m.: *Golf Tournament* - Oakmore Golf Club, 3737 N. Wilson Way, Stockton, CA
- 2:00 p.m.: *Open House* - Lodi Japanese Community Hall
- 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.: *Happy Hour* - Lodi Japanese Community Hall
- 7:30 p.m.: *Banquet & Program* - Lodi Japanese Community Hall - MC: Kinji Hiramoto

#### Sunday, July 24th

- 9:00 a.m.: *Brunch* - Lodi Japanese Community Hall



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# 1915 - Lodi Baseball - 1983

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## AN EXTRAORDINARY JAPANESE AMERICAN SPORT SAGA

One of Japanese America's extraordinary sport saga.

There was nothing quite like it in its day and perhaps there still isn't in the annals of Nikkei sports-dom, particularly in terms of a very durable, successful baseball program --- a talented bunch of high flying flannel knickered athletes in the midst of agriculturally rich San Joaquin Valley, where the community's rabid enthusiasm, loyalty and all out support for the team, became an inherent characteristic and an innate way of life.

Historically, this is a remarkable story about Lodi's long illustrious Japanese American baseball organization, whose indestructable niche in the eyes of the beholder, not only parallels the district's other pride and joy --- the nationally famous fresh Flame Tokay grape, but the enterprising duo developed into an impressive winning combination.

The major resemblance --- if any --- is that both programs have been uniquely and eminently successful within their own sphere and objectives; and to the local natives, both products have been part and parcel, an insatiable hand-in-hand love affair with this rural principality's romantic scene for the past sixty-eight fabulous years.

When people think of Lodi, they naturally speak in terms of Tokay grapes and on the lighter side in this case, with the town's far-famed baseball organization. And here in this conservative farming community, located some eighty miles east of San Francisco, grape and baseball complimented each other and Lodi managed to develop a rich tradition with the national pastime. Nikkei historians invariably associated this fascinating component with this fair city's colorful past.

In this Golden State's early turbulent ethnic scenario, Lodi's picturesque Nihonmachi served as a soul-stirring socio/economic bee-hive for thousands of adventuresome Nikkei from throughout the West coast during the young developing stage of the reckless twentieth century.

Lured by its bountiful vintage harvest, Lodi District became an annual late summer mecca for rambling Issei itinerants and youthful Nisei students, hoping to make a few dollars before heading back to college. This lush world famous farming region acted as a diversion point, a promising cross-road filled with dreams and hope for many a budding Nikkei and today its far ranging luminaries is like a who's who of Japanese America that includes among others, National JAFL presidents and officers.

It was picking and packing countless boxes of crimson clustered Tokays through endless, hot dusty rows of grape vines for Eastern markets during the day and off to teeming "Japanese Town" on lively Main Street at night for rest and relaxation.

The town's popular baseball team in this respect, filled a much needed entertainment void and played a significant role along with imported Japanese Chambara movies as a major weekend attraction. The Pride of Grape Junction was a rallying point for this predominantly Hiroshima-Ken settlement and to this day continues to support baseball for state-wide competition.

This obsession and affair with the national pastime and its memorable legacy, all started at the turn of the twentieth century, just before the First World War.

Lodi, now an economically substantial growing city of 40,000 came into existence in 1869, a by-product of the wild rampaging stampede for the elusive glittering gold in the nearby foothills of the high sierras. The first Flame Tokays were planted along the banks of the winding Mokelumne River's fertile sandy loam soil a year later in 1870 and incredibly vineyards over a hundred years old are still producing today.

Subsequently, a handful of pioneering Japanese, also out to strike it rich in a strange new world, steamed across the Blue Pacific a short two decades later and found their way to Lodi. The birth of colorful Nihonmachi, "across-the-track", adjacent Mission Arch landmark over Pine Street, started to emerge around 1902.

Once settled, the newly arrived young immigrants from Japan, looking for social mix and recreational activities as residence in Northern San Joaquin County, formed its first baseball team in 1915, monikered the Shikishima Club. It is little wonder at the time, that this would be the beginning of a great, enduring tradition that is now heading into the not-to-distant twenty first century.

Of interest, one of the key organizers and player during this initial period, was Jitsutaro Hiramoto, the well known and respected patriarch of the West Lodi Hiramoto clan and of course synonymous with the progress and historical growth of the Nikkei community. His involvement and regard for baseball set the stage for an unbroken string of continuity within his own family, as all four sons --- Johnny, Kiichi, Kinji and Eddie all followed in their dad's indelible, spiked footstep.

According to records, the Shikishima horsehiders were quite a gung-ho outfit, taking on all comers without fear, including a barnstorming tour of Seattle and the Great Northwest.

With baseball gain in popularity during the Golden Twenties, Lodi along with the rest of the Pacific Coast's Japanese communities up-graded and reinforced their respective teams by recruiting talented Nisei ball players from Hawaii. The economy and booming times were on the up-beat, the industrious and imaginative Isseis were reaping the lucrative harvest of entrepreneurial success, were financially flushed and with it, a new dimension was taking shape in form of a fast semi-pro baseball program.

Also, about this time, the local aggregation changed their name to Lodi Athletic Club. Familiar names that formed the nucleus along with the "part-time pros" during this exciting decade, included among others, the Funamura Brothers --- George, Sam, Norman and Roach, Cal Golden Bear's Ouye Brothers --- Noboru, Harold and Fred, Frank and Nobi Matsumoto, Fred Fujii, Roy Koyama, Katsuzo Yamashita and Taiichiro Hori, now with Toshiba Corporation's head office in Tokyo.

Incidentally, Lawrence Park at this stage became the home field and in due time, one of the best ball parks for Japanese Americans to cavort on. The luxury of performing on manicured turf was an exception, rather than the rule for the great majority of teams in America.



The Great Depression of the early thirties had its ups and downs, but the grape-crushers managed to survive and along with changing time was now flying the color of Lodi YMA.

The one single highlight of this era and still nostalgically reminisced by the old-timers, was the memorable appearance of the 1931 All-Japan High School Baseball Champion, Hiroshima City prep.

It was a notable, wing-ding holiday for Lodians, a monumental event, if for no other reason than the fact, that most of the residence here originated from Hiroshima prefecture. The visitors were royally entertained, wined and dined, including a sight seeing trip to Yosemite National Park. Of course, the outcome of the game itself, really for all intent and purpose became anti-climatic --- however just for the book, the visiting sluggers from the Land Of The Rising Sun took the YMA contingent to the proverbial cleaner.

From a more artistic and winning point of view and that's what the game, realistically is all about, according to the fanatical die-hards, Lodi started to make themselves known on a more positive note and reckoned with in 1938.

With the Lodi Buddhist Church as benefactor, the up and coming YMBA Templars literally took the newly reorganized Northern California Japanese Baseball League by storm. The well-balanced Templars became a potent factor, one of the best in the state and more or less ruled the strong NCJBL, that included Oakland Merritts, Alameda Taiikus, Mt. Eden Cardinals, Sebastopol Sakuras, Walnut Grove Deltans, San Jose Asahis and Stockton Yamatos.

During the Pre-World War Two period, the mighty Templars were the glamour team around the circuit and the consistent headliner of the league, reputed as the toughest Nisei loop in continental United States. The Red and White crew was the crown jewel of the national pastime and they rode a triumphant crest of winning wave during the late thirties and at the turn of the forties.

The streaking YMBA outfit went on a relentless victorious rampage. They were nosed out in a title play-off the first year by powerful San Jose Asahis, but returned with vengeance with back-to-back flags in 1939 and '40. They topped the campaign by winning the California State Championship Series and mythical National crown over the star-studded San Pedro Skippers in Los Angeles during Nisei Week and repeated again at the Annual Lodi Grape & Wine Festival before a capacity Lawrence Park crowd.

The defending champs, riddled by War-Time Selective Service Draft, made a drive for a third consecutive pennant in 1941, but the young rookie laden machine was nipped in another play-off tilt against the strong neighboring Stockton Yamatos by a single run.

The all home-grown team during this successful four year span was superbly whipped into a smooth cohesive playing unit by Coach Nobu Matsumoto and captained by the legendary Matsuo "Oki" Okazaki.

As it stands historically, only Pearl Harbor and the infamous, tragic War-Time Evacuation and Internment, kept the dominating Templars from generating an awesome dynasty, well into the forties, along with the vaunted San Pedro Skippers, the Southland's perennial kingpin.

Incidentally, it might be added here, that insofar as media coverage was concerned, the Templars were accorded tremendous support and rave reviews by the press --- Lodi Times, Lodi News-Sentinel, as well as from Nichi Bei and The New World Sun, the two San Francisco vernaculars and Los Angeles Rafu Shimpō.

#### 1942 to 1945 --- TIME-OUT !

Undeterred by the traumatic "Relocation Center" experience, Lodi's resilient baseball program was reactivated and gradually started on the come-back trail in 1946.

In 1952, a scant six years since "Camp Days", big time baseball returned and became a major attraction again in Tokay City. Through the initiative of Mas Okuhara and interest of local supporters, Lodi inaugurated the Annual California State Double "AA" Baseball Tournament. To no surprise, the popular contest became an instant hit and Lodi continued and acted as tourney host for five consecutive years. For his leadership and inspiration, Okuhara was the recipient of San Francisco Nichi Bei Times annual distinguished "Nisei Athlete Of The Year" award in 1975.

It was only a matter of time before the inevitable "cream" surfaced to the top again. This time, providing the necessary punch and impetus, was a brand new collection of young ball players, a refreshing new look --- the Sanseis, third generation Americans of Japanese ancestry.

Playing under the banner of Lodi Nisei Civic Society, this youthful squad produced another amazing victorious skein by methodically steam rolling to the California State Single "A" Tournament Championship in 1962, '63, '64 and '66. They had to settle for an un-accustomed runner-up spot in 1965. In consecutive order, they wrapped up the title with wins over Gardena F.O.A., Sacramento and Los Angeles Pirates, lost to the Pirates the following year, but rebounded by whipping Fresno All-Stars in 1966. In 1968, Florin A.C. outlasted Lodi in the finals.

This classy post-war edition of Tokay terrors, touted by some local baseball experts as almost on par, if not equal to the storied Templars, featured the sterling mound performance of chucker Sab Nakawatase, Wally Yamasaki, the phenomenal hitting of Gary Yamada, and the Fukumoto Bros., Muts & Tom.

The victorious roster included Joe Morimoto, Dave Kinoshita, Wally Yamasaki, Tom Fukumoto, Muts Fukumoto, Al Horita, Hideo Nakawatase, Sab Nakawatase, Dennis Furuoka, Dennis Morita, Ron Tanaka, Fred Furuoka, Newton Iwamura, Lance Iwamura, Aki Okazaki, Tom Nitto, Fred Nagata, Gary Yamada, Larry Yamasaki and Gary Tsutsumi. The coaching staff was made up of Red Tanaka, Shot Iwamura and Mauch Yamashita.

Tireless Mauch Yamashita is still faithfully at the helm today, unselfishly nurturing and managing the JACL horsehiders. It is truly a labor of love with good natured Mauch. He is Mr. Baseball to Lodi and the dean of California coaches with over a quarter of a century of dedicated service under his paunchy belt.

It is most appropriate and fitting that on this historic occasion today, the Lodi Chapter of Japanese American Citizens League salute and honor Mauch Yamashita and his contemporaries for a "job-well-done" and hope that this unique and remarkable heritage with the great national pastime continues unabated for another sixty-eight marvelous years in Lodi.

--- Fred K. Oshima



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# *A Profile of a Champion*

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**YMBA TEMPLARS**  
**1940 California State Champions**

**KIICHI HIRAMOTO:** Dependable second sacker of defensively strong Templar aggregation. Kiichi hardly missed a lick with his glove and made double plays around the keystone sack look awfully easy. Lives in St. Louis, home of World Champion Baseball Cardinals and is in tool supply business.

**GEORGE TAKEUCHI:** Basketball was really his "cup 'o tea", but performed with equal skill in baseball as a crack silky smooth shortstop. One of the league's best. The team's spirited, flamboyant player, Goerge is a barber in Stockton.

**JOHNNY HIRAMOTO:** At third base, Johnny was the mighty anchor for the highly touted infield. Also remembered as a daring diminutive lead-off man with an uncanny knack for drawing base on balls. Hiramoto resides in El Cerrito on the Eastbay side and is an engineer with internationally famous Bechtol Group in San Francisco, better known these days as the home of Secretary of State, George P. Schultz and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger of White House fame.

**HIDEO "BUTCH" HAYASHI:** Passed away, 1976 in San Mateo. "Butch" was the handsome youthful catcher with the sling-shot arm for the titlist.

**SAM FUNAMURA:** Deceased --- 1977. Veteran Sam, the versatile all-purpose senior member of the squad. The incluencing player of the organization, his long diamond career was only matched by his highly respected civic leadership in the community.

**MASAJI "RED" TANAKA:** The "Pride of Acampo". His tantalizing mound stint was the sensation of the league and earned him All-Star recognition. A post-war coach, Red is retired and a fishing addict. Co-Chairman of Baseball Reunion with Mas Okuhara.

**SHIG KABA:** The Templar's reliable "Mr. Clutch". Need a run, leave it to Shig. The slugging right fielder lives in Chicago, but plans to give up Windy City for California upon retirement.

**NOBI MATSUMOTO:** The coaching brain and master strategist. Nob's tenacious managing expertise motivated the championship team to compete, to excel and to win and this they certainly did, convincingly and in stylish manner. The vineyardist/sportsman lives in suburban Acampo.

**SHOZO "SHOT" IWAMURA:** The club's pure power hitter. Fence buster non-pareil and undisputed All-League outfielder. A bona-fide pro prospect, played in service for Fort Bliss, Texas Army nine that was sprinkled with major and minor leaguers. Shot manages a vineyard in Lodi.

**TOM ISHIDA:** Lefty first baseman. Believe Tom's stellar playing around the initial sack, sold more fresh sardines and Sashimi Tuna for his dad's A B Fish Market than all the media advertising possibly could. Retired, Tom makes his home in Sacramento.

**WILLIAM "WILD BILL" KAGAWA:** The tall lean chucker was the pitching corp's fast ball artist and dazzled the Northern California Japanese Baseball League batters with his blazing strikes. Bill is a partner of Pine Auto Supply with current Lodi JACL coach, Mauch Yamashita.

**MAS OKUHARA:** Fresh from a starring role with Lodi American Legion Post 22 nine, Mas beefed up the club's deep hurling staff in their successful stretch drive for the pennant in 1940. Played for Fort Snelling Army team up in Minneapolis. Active in California baseball circle, Okuhara is also Reunion Co-Chairman. When not involved with the national pastime, Mas works at his jewelry/engraving business in town. Plus he just discovered another irrevocable avocation, "hooked" on golf!

**KEIZO OKUHARA:** A member of Acampo's well known Okuhara baseball family, Keizo was the team's speed merchant. The fleetfooted outfielder and one time Lodi High sprinter made a specialty of converting sure hits into simple routine outs. Keizo is a nursery operator in town.

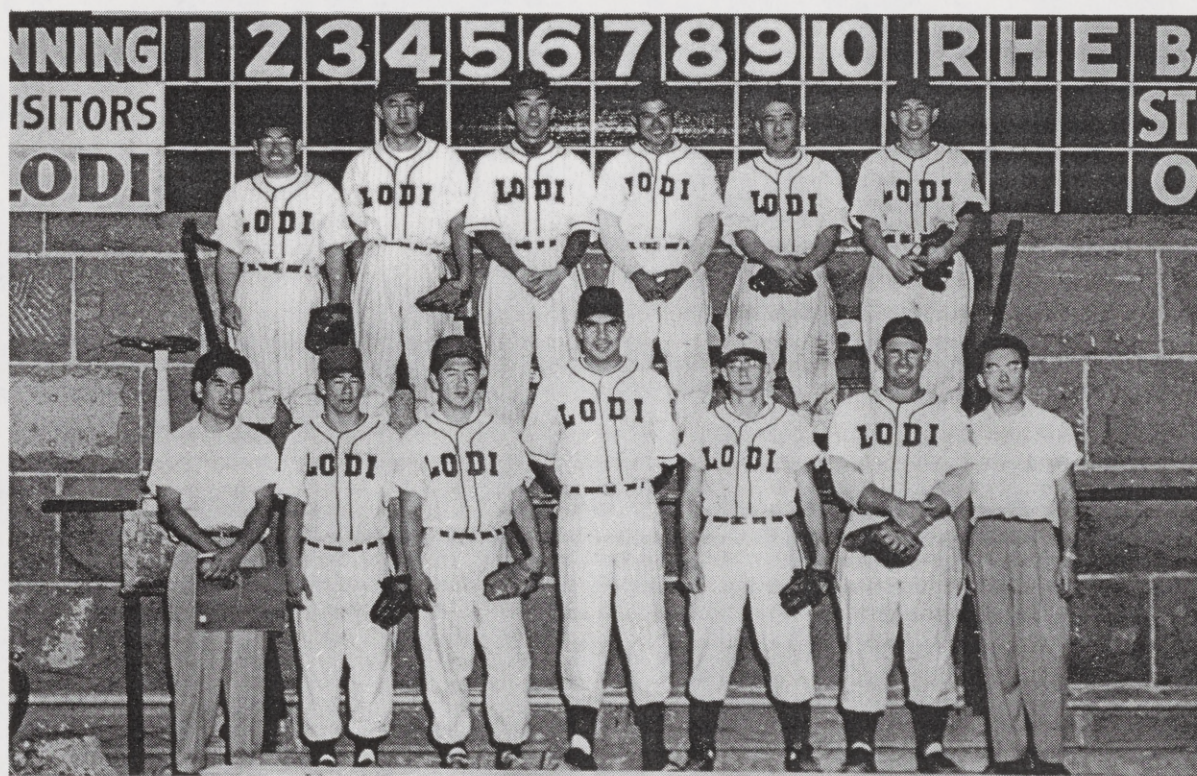
**MATSUO "OKI" OKAZAKI:** A legend and still Lodi's greatest all-around Nikkei athlete, let alone one of Lodi High School Flames' all-time football heros. The three sport super star captained the Templars to the California State Championship and mythical national crown. An NCJBL All-Star, "Oki" is an independent retailer in Lodi.

**KAZUTO "PHAT" ITO:** (Not in photo: Deceased, 1982. "Phat" Ito thrilled the home-town fans by baffling the vaunted San Pedro Skippers in the memorable state series classic with his easy deceptive hurling.





West Lodi Club, 1930



Lodi Athletic Club at Folsom Prison, 1952





First State Nisei AA Baseball Championship Tournament  
Lodi Athletic Club, 1953



Lodi Nisei Civics, Champions 1962





1964 Championship Team



Lodi Nisei Civic Team, 1974



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Treasurers ..... Harry Tanaka, Calvin Yamada  
Secretary ..... Mary Tanaka  
Corresponding Secretaries..... Bessie Iwamura, Sumi Okuhara  
Historians..... Nobu Matsumoto, Fred Oshima, Shozo Iwamura  
Publicity ..... Fred Oshima  
Banquet ..... Don Morita, Kub Daijogo, Eiji Okuhara  
Master-of-Ceremonies ..... Kinji Hiramoto  
Social Hour ..... Ich Horimoto, Matsuo Okazaki  
Golf Tournament ..... Jim Morita, Jun Kawamura  
Reunion Booklet ..... Leland Noma  
Motel Reservations ..... Tets Matsumoto  
Registration & Reception ... Mauch Yamashita, Terry Oga, Haruko Oga  
Sunday Brunch ..... Micki Daijogo, Yo Okuhara  
Clean-Up ..... Monty Urakami